

What is claimed is:

1. A method for handling an application in a communication between a first end and a second end involving an application layer, a transport layer, and a network layer, which method comprises steps of:

5 receiving network layer packets from the first end of the communication, which packets contain application information provided using application layer processing;

processing the application information using application layer processing; and

10 transmitting network layer packets toward the second end of the communication, which packets contain information resulting from the application layer processing.

2. The method of claim 1 which further comprises steps of:

15 receiving network layer packets from the second end of the communication, which packets contain further application information provided using application layer processing;

processing the further application information using application layer processing; and

20 transmitting network layer packets toward the first end of the communication, which packets contain information resulting from the application layer processing.

3. The method of claim 2 which further comprises steps of:

transmitting transport layer information from the first end to the second end; and

25 transmitting transport layer information from the second end to the first end.

4. The method of claim 3 which further comprises steps of:

receiving application layer session messages from the first end; and

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responding to the first end to the application layer session messages.

5. The method of claim 4 wherein the steps of receiving and responding to application layer session messages comprises a step of establishing an application layer session with the first end.

6. The method of claim 3 which further comprises steps of:

maintaining information, or information derived from, at least some transport layer information sent from the first end to the second end; and

maintaining information, or information derived from, at least some transport layer information sent from the second end to the first end.

7. The method of claim 6 which further comprises a step of associating network packets with the communication using at least some of the maintained information obtained from transport layer information and at least some of the maintained information obtained from network layer information.

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